

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8182

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint a commemorative coin
in recognition of James Weldon Johnson.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 22, 2022

Mr. LAWSON of Florida introduced the following bill; which was referred to
the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint a com-
memorative coin in recognition of James Weldon John-
son.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “James Weldon John-
5 son Commemorative Coin Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) James Weldon Johnson was born on June
9 17, 1871, in Jacksonville, Florida, to a Bahamian
10 mother, Helen Louise Dillet, and African-American

1 father, James Johnson. He had a younger brother,
2 John Rosamund Johnson. His mother had a large
3 influence on his interest in literature and music.

4 (2) At the age of 16, James Weldon Johnson
5 enrolled at Atlanta University, now Clark Atlanta
6 University, a historically Black college, and grad-
7 uated in 1894.

8 (3) James Weldon Johnson returned to Jack-
9 sonville following his graduation, where he served as
10 principal of the Stanton School. He expanded the
11 school to include Florida's first high school for Afri-
12 can Americans, which opened in 1898.

13 (4) In 1895, James Weldon Johnson started
14 the Daily American, Florida's first African-American
15 newspaper.

16 (5) During this period, James Weldon Johnson
17 was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1897. He be-
18 came the first African American to pass the Florida
19 Bar since the Reconstruction Era ended.

20 (6) In 1899, James Weldon Johnson wrote the
21 poem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" to honor Abra-
22 ham Lincoln's birthday. His brother, John
23 Rosamund Johnson, composed the music to turn it
24 into a song. In 1919, the National Advancement of

1 Colored People (NAACP) designated the song as the
2 “Negro National Anthem”.

3 (7) As part of the Great Migration, James
4 Weldon Johnson and John Rosamund Johnson
5 moved to Harlem, New York. They became com-
6 posers for Broadway shows and later became inte-
7 gral figures of the Harlem Renaissance.

8 (8) After winning the election, in 1906, Presi-
9 dent Theodore Roosevelt appointed James Weldon
10 Johnson as U.S. Consul in Venezuela. In 1909, he
11 was appointed as U.S. Consul in Nicaragua by
12 President William Taft.

13 (9) Following his diplomatic service, James
14 Weldon Johnson became a field secretary for the
15 NAACP in 1916. In 1920, he became the first Afri-
16 can-American Executive Secretary for the NAACP,
17 where he helped increase membership, create new
18 chapters, and organize Civil Rights movements
19 across the country.

20 (10) James Weldon Johnson represented the
21 NAACP as the chief Congressional lobbyist to en-
22 courage passage of the Representative Leonidas
23 Dyer anti-lynching bill. This bill went on to pass the
24 U.S. House of Representatives in 1922 but failed in
25 the U.S. Senate due to the filibuster.

1 (11) In 1930, after serving 10 years in the
2 NAACP, James Weldon Johnson accepted an offer
3 to become the Spence Chair of Creative Literature
4 and Writing at Fisk University, a historically black
5 college in Nashville, Tennessee.

6 (12) In 1934, James Weldon Johnson was
7 hired as the first Black professor at New York Uni-
8 versity, where he taught Creative Literature and
9 Education.

10 (13) James Weldon Johnson was an accom-
11 plished novelist and poet. He released several poetry
12 collections and novels, among his most popular
13 pieces of literature were God's Trombones: Seven
14 Negro Sermons in Verse and The Autobiography of
15 an Ex-Colored Man.

16 (14) James Weldon Johnson passed away sud-
17 denly in 1938. His funeral was held in Harlem, New
18 York, where over 2,000 people attended.

19 (15) James Weldon Johnson's excellence revolu-
20 tionized literature, music, education, politics, and
21 law. His fearlessness to fight for equality created
22 pathways for African Americans to proudly pursue
23 their aspirations.

1 **SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.**

2 (a) DENOMINATIONS.—In recognition and celebration
3 of James Weldon Johnson, the Secretary of the Treasury
4 (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall
5 mint and issue not more than 400,000 \$1 coins, which
6 shall—

- 7 (1) weigh 26.73 grams;
8 (2) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and
9 (3) contain not less than 90-percent silver.

10 (b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coin minted under this
11 Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of
12 title 31, United States Code.

13 (c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
14 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins
15 minted under this Act shall be considered to be numis-
16 matic items.

17 **SEC. 4. DESIGN OF THE COIN.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The designs for the coin minted
19 under this Act shall be emblematic of James Weldon
20 Johnson and shall bear the name and image of James
21 Weldon Johnson.

22 (b) DESIGNATIONS AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On the coin
23 minted under this Act there shall be—

- 24 (1) a designation of the denomination of the
25 coin;
26 (2) an inscription of the year “2025”;

(4) inscriptions of the words “Liberty”, “In God We Trust”, “United States of America”, and “E Pluribus Unum”.

(c) SELECTION.—The designs for the coin minted under this Act shall be—

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee.

14 SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF THE COIN.

15 (a) QUALITY OF THE COIN.—The coin minted under
16 this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

17 (b) PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may
18 issue the coin minted under this Act only during the 1-
19 year period beginning on January 1, 2025.

20 SEC. 6. SALE OF THE COIN.

21 (a) SALE PRICE.—The coin issued under this Act
22 shall be sold by the Secretary at a price based upon the
23 sum of—

24 (1) the face value of the coin;

(2) the surcharge provided in section 7(a) with respect to such coin; and

6 (b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk
7 sales of the coin issued under this Act at a reasonable
8 discount.

9 (c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

13 (2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to pre-
14 paid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a rea-
15 sonable discount.

16 SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of the coin minted under
18 this Act shall include a surcharge of \$10 per coin for the
19 \$1 coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coin issued under this Act shall be promptly paid equally by the Secretary to the Historic Stanton, Inc., and the James Weldon Johnson Foun-

1 dation, for the purpose of strengthening educational out-
2 comes for students, with a focus on students of color.

3 (c) AUDITS.—The Historic Stanton, Inc., and James
4 Weldon Johnson Foundation shall be subject to the audit
5 requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United
6 States Code, with respect to amounts received under sub-
7 section (b).

8 (d) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a),
9 no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance
10 under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as
11 of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin
12 would result in the number of commemorative coin pro-
13 grams issued during such year to exceed the annual 2
14 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under
15 section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code. The
16 Secretary may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

17 **SEC. 8. FINANCIAL ASSURANCES.**

18 The Secretary shall take such actions as may be nec-
19 essary to ensure that—

20 (1) minting and issuing the coin under this Act
21 will not result in any net cost to the United States
22 Government; and

23 (2) no funds, including applicable surcharges,
24 are disbursed to the recipient designated in section
25 7 until the total cost of designing and issuing all of

1 the coins authorized by this Act (including labor,
2 materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses,
3 marketing, and shipping) is recovered by the United
4 States Treasury, consistent with sections 5112(m)
5 and 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code.

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